

AMENDMENT

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently amended) A method for the preparation of low molecular weight chitosan oligosaccharides, which comprises:
 - 1) quantitatively weighing chitosan powder,
 - 2) adding an electrolyte solution to the chitosan powder to ~~obtain a~~ obtain a chitosan:electrolyte solvent (W/V) ratio = 1:8~30, wherein the electrolyte solution comprises a salt and an acid in solution,
 - 3) stirring the solution to uniformity, then subjecting the solution to microwave irradiation,
 - 4) adjusting the solution to neutrality with 1~10 M NaOH, KOH or ammonia water to obtain a pale yellow floc and then settling the floc at least 30 minutes at 1~10 °C in a cold closet,
 - 5) filtering the pale yellow floc to obtain a precipitate and then desiccating the precipitate at 50~70°C to obtain a dried product,
 - 6) crushing the dried product to 20~100 mesh and assaying the molecular weight of chitosan oligosaccharides, and taking chitosan oligosaccharides having a molecular weight of 600~30000 Da as the finished product.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~the claim 3~~ claim 2, wherein the electrolyte salt is NaCl, KCl, CaCl₂ or FeCl₃.
5. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~the claim 3~~ claim 2, wherein the ionic strength of electrolyte solution is 0.01~0.1.

6. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~the claim 3~~ claim 2, wherein the acid is hydrochloric acid, acetic acid, citric acid, tartaric acid, formic acid, and wherein the concentration of tartaric acid and citric acid is 0.5~4% (W/V), and the concentration of hydrochloric acid, acetic acid and formic acid is 0.5~4% (V/V).
7. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~the claim 3~~ claim 2, wherein the microwave energy is 480~800 W.
8. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~the claim 3~~ claim 2, wherein the microwave irradiation time is 1~12 minutes.
9. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~the claim 2, 3, 7~~ claim 2, 3, 7 or 8, wherein the molecular weight of the chitosan oligosaccharides obtained from the electrolyte solution comprising NaCl ranges from 2.5×10^4 ~ 9.14×10^3 Da.
10. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~the claim 2, 3, 7~~ claim 2, 3, 7 or 8, wherein the molecular weight of the chitosan oligosaccharides obtained from the electrolyte solution comprising KCl ranges from 2.0×10^4 ~ 6.02×10^2 Da.
11. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~the claim 2, 3, 7~~ claim 2, 3, 7 or 8, wherein the molecular weight of the chitosan oligosaccharides obtained from the electrolyte solution comprising CaCl_2 ranges from 1.8×10^4 ~ 4.79×10^2 Da.
12. (Currently amended) A method for the preparation of low molecular weight chitosan oligosaccharides, which comprises:
 exposing an electrolyte solution containing a salt and an acid in solution and chitosan to microwave irradiation, wherein the acid is selected from the group consisting of: 0.5~4% (V/V) hydrochloric acid, 0.5~4% (V/V) acetic acid, 0.5~4% (W/V) citric acid, 0.5~4% (W/V) tartaric acid, and 0.5~4% (V/V) formic acid.